

FIELD MANUAL · CONVERSATION PROTOCOL

TDER

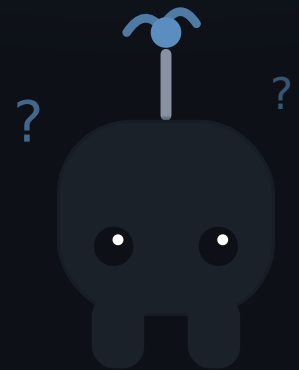
A four-step protocol for turning a confused or skeptical conversation into one where the other person can actually hear you. Built for sales calls, support calls, and any conversation where trust has to be earned before anything else can land.

TRUST

DEBUNK

EXPLAIN

REVEAL



People don't argue with reality. They argue with their idea of it.

Most people aren't weighing your words against the facts. They're checking your words against whatever they already believe — a first impression, a rumor, a bad experience with someone else. That belief acts like a filter. Whatever you say gets bent to fit it.

This is why explaining harder often backfires. New information doesn't replace the old belief — it gets absorbed into it. The listener stays consistent with what they already think, even if that means reinterpreting your honesty as evasion.

Almost nobody does this on purpose. It isn't dishonesty — it's how confused minds protect themselves from having to rebuild their whole picture of a situation at once.

So the job isn't to win an argument. It's to walk the other person through a sequence that lets them arrive at an accurate picture on their own terms — without ever feeling cornered.

That sequence is **TDER**: Trust, Debunk, Explain, Reveal.

WHAT YOU SAY

"We'd like to send your customers a special offer through our platform."

WHAT A SKEPTICAL LISTENER HEARS

"A stranger wants my customer list and I have no idea what they'll do with it."

WORKING DEFINITION

A confused listener isn't hearing your sentence. They're hearing whatever your sentence becomes once it passes through what they already believe about you, your industry, or people in general. Change what passes through first — then the sentence lands clean.

Trust, then Debunk.



STEP 1

Trust

Before you ask for anything or say anything persuasive, give the listener something they can verify for themselves — not just your word for it. This lowers their guard so the next three steps can actually be heard.

DO

Point to something concrete and checkable — a real reference, a real policy, a real number.

AVOID

Asking them to "just trust you" before you've given them anything to check.

"Here's exactly how this works — you can verify it before we go any further."



STEP 2

Debunk

Name the likely misconception directly, without blaming them for having it. This clears the wrong belief out of the way before you try to put anything true in its place.

DO

Say the objection out loud first, and frame it as a reasonable thing to have assumed.

AVOID

Getting defensive, or skipping straight to your explanation before naming the myth.

"I know this might look like [common objection] — that's a fair thing to wonder."

Explain, then Reveal.



STEP 3

Explain

Now that the myth is out of the way, fill the gap with the real reason — briefly. This closes the "why" as a live question in their mind so it stops competing for their attention.

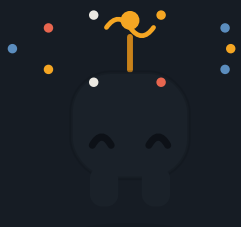
DO

Keep it to one or two sentences. A short, honest reason lands as confidence.

AVOID

Over-justifying. A long explanation reads as defensive and reopens doubt.

"The reason we do it this way is simple: [honest reason]. That's it."



STEP 4

Reveal

With trust built, the myth cleared, and the context filled in, the real offer can finally be heard for what it is — not filtered through suspicion. This is where you make the actual ask.

DO

Keep it simple and direct. The groundwork already did the hard work.

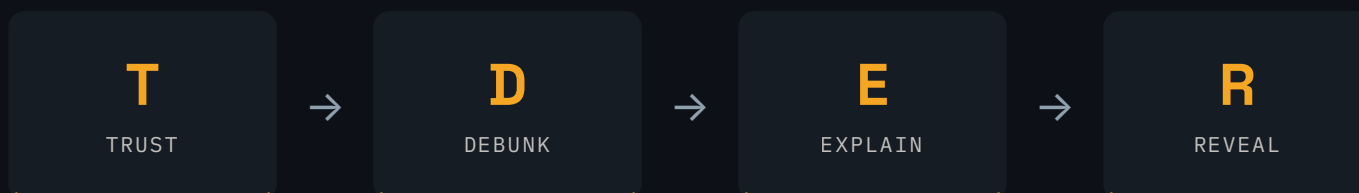
AVOID

Adding new justifications here — that reopens a conversation you already closed.

"So here's what we're actually offering you: [clear value]."

Order isn't a suggestion. It's the mechanism.

Each step neutralizes a specific reason the next step would otherwise fail. Run them out of order and that protection disappears — even if every individual sentence you say is true.



IF YOU...	YOU GET	WHAT HAPPENS
Skip Trust	Reveal	Sounds like a scam. The offer gets rejected before it's even understood.
Skip Debunk	Explain w/o Debunk	The old myth is still live in their head — it absorbs your explanation instead of being replaced by it.
Skip Explain	Debunk → Reveal	The "why" stays an open question, quietly competing for attention with your actual offer.
Reorder: Reveal first	Reveal → Trust	You've made the ask before earning the right to. Everything after sounds like backpedaling.

RULE OF THUMB

If a conversation is going badly, the first thing to check isn't your words — it's which step you skipped or ran out of order.

Keep this next to the phone.

Trust

What can they check for themselves right now?

Debunk

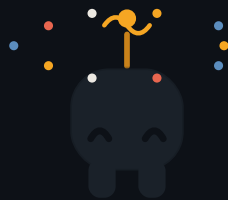
What's the wrong assumption they probably already have?

Explain

What's the one-sentence reason that closes the "why"?

Reveal

Now that they're not defensive – what do we actually want them to hear?



Trust clears the defensiveness. Debunk clears the myth. Explain closes the gap. Reveal delivers the truth undiluted — and by then, it's finally being heard for what it actually is.